

NWEC

NEWSLETTER

A Biannual Publication of the National Women's Education Centre of Japan

INFORMATION SERVICES AT WOMEN'S INSTITUTIONS IN JAPAN

1. INTRODUCTION

Women's institutions were established as a result of persevering commitment of many women, and have been used as centres of their activities. While supporting voluntary study activities of women, these institutions, with their accommodations and wedding ceremony halls, have contributed to improving the quality of life and

Women, the importance of the role of these institutions is on the rise, and their functions to be needed have been changing along with social trends. The most prominent among them is information.

With the increasing importance of information, emphasis in recent years has been placed on networking, as an infrastructure supporting the improvement in the status of women. The action programme issued in 1991, the 'New Domestic Action Programme towards the Year 2000 (First Revision)' cites under its basic policy the promotion of networking of women's information. The Programme says 'to meet diversified information needs of women, efforts will be made to strengthen the functions and construct networking for collecting and disseminating information at national and public women's education centres as well as regional public institutions such as libraries. These functions will be networked'. The Programme expects women's institutions to serve as regional centres for the national information network. However, their smooth operation would require experience in information services and the ability to use computers as well as human resources.

The National Women's Education Centre conducted a survey on women's institutions across the country on their current information activities, the contents of required information and projected measures to improve information services. As a summary of the result of the survey, this report seeks to probe the possibility of promoting information networking based on women's institutions.

Women's Institutions

Women's institutions referred to here are institutions established primarily for women and those concerned with women's issues. The main purpose of the institutions is to conduct seminars, exchanges, information services and other activities and serve as a centre for group and individual activities for developing women's personality

2. OUTLINE OF SURVEY

- (1) Institutions surveyed: 764 women's institutions in Japan
- (2) Method of survey: Filling in questionnaires sent by mail
- (3) Time of survey: November 1990
- (4) Survey items: Name of institution, name of founder, person in charge of management, number of staff members, type of

duce computers, etc.

- (5) Number of replies: 366 (rate of replies - 47.9%)
- (6) Method of tabulating answers

In this survey, respondents were asked to circle the appropriate answers on programmes and information services. The following summary shows the results tabulated from multiple answers to each question. As there was no limit to the number of answers, the percentage points may add up to more than 100.

The survey has nine questions. Questions 1 through 7 are to be answered by all institutions. Question 8 is to be answered by institutions that have or plan to introduce computers. Question 9 is for institutions that have no plan to introduce computers. (See the attached table for details).

3. SURVEY RESULT AND ANALYSIS

(1) Outline of institutions surveyed

a. Year of establishment

The date of the establishment of institutions surveyed spanned from 1886 to 1990. Some rebuilding of old institutions and establishment of new ones are planned after 1991 but the number of new establishments has been on the decline since 1982.

and ability and increasing their knowledge. This survey was conducted on about 800 women's institutions across Japan. They are institutions either set up and operated by the national or prefectural governments or local municipalities or those privately-established and operated but in which the local governments are involved in their management.

b. Number of staff members

The institution with the largest number of staff has 110 -82 female and 28 male- members (includes 67 part-time staff members). Three institutions have more than 50 staff members. On the whole, however, many institutions are small with smaller number of staff members. Some 63% of the institutions have 2 to 6 staff members, with the largest concentration on 4 staff members. Twenty-nine institutions said they had '0' or 'unknown' number of staff suggesting that they operate rental hall without staff.

(2) Actual conditions of information services

Question 1 Current programmes

The most popular form of programmes was '(3) conducting study courses, lectures, training courses and other events' with 325 institutions (88.8%). This was followed by '(1) providing conference rooms, lecture halls, sports facilities and other facilities' with 298 institutions (81.4%). This shows that the main objective of the institutions surveyed is providing facilities and conducting programmes there. Also, over 50% of the institutions offer '(5) conducting various consulting services (188 institutions) and (6) library services and lending books (183 institutions).

Question 2 Information services provided

Some 128 institutions (35.0%) said they provide no information services.

The most popular information services provided are '(1) reading and lending books and other materials' (178 institutions), followed by '(4) publication of PR bulletins (135 institutions). This shows that most of the information services are provided on a conventional basis. Computer-aided information services was on the bottom of the list with 11 institutions (3.0%).

Question 3 Information which is needed by many users

The information with the largest number of inquiries from users were those concerning (4) information on courses, lecture meetings and other study opportunities (213 institutions). More than half of the institutions cited this item. This was followed by (3) information on the activities of organizations and groups and (5) information on the use of facilities and organizations. Some 16.4% of the institutions cited (1) inquiries on the contents and location of books and other materials, but among institutions with more than 11 staff, the proportion exceeded 40%.

Question 4 The most frequently used materials/facilities in answering inquiries

Over 40% of the institutions said they '(5) do not refer to any materials'. The most frequently used materials was '(3) original materials made by the institutions (122 institutions), followed by (1) books, serials and other materials. However, among institutions with more than 11 staffs, books, serials etc. were the most frequently used materials of reference with over 70% of the institutions checking the answer.

Question 5 Methods of dealing with difficult inquiries

By far the most popular method is to '(1) inquire other institutions' (63.1%). Over 10% of the institutions said they are '(5) able to deal with inquiries with their own facilities/staff. Smaller institutions are more likely to cite the above item (5).

Question 6 Plans to augment information services

About 40% of the institutions said they '(8) have no plan to augment information services'. The second item on the list was '(1) increase books and other materials', '(6) strengthen collaboration with other institutions' and '(5) improve the quality of staffs through training etc.'

Question 7 Introduction of computers

Forty-nine institutions (13.4%) already have computers/terminals, and 14 institutions (4.1%) are requesting the budget for their introduction. In sum, 63 institutions have already introduced or intend to introduce computers in some manner. Also, 29 institutions are studying introducing computers. This shows that computerization will proceed gradually in pace with the introduction of information devices in administrative organizations. Mostly personal computers as well as some word processors are used by institutions. Some 245 institutions (66.9%) said they '(6) have no plan to introduce computers'.

Question 8 Purpose of introducing computers

More than half of the institutions that have or intend to introduce computers say computers are or will be used to '(1) streamline operations'. However, the items of library services, on-line information services, database building and other information services were cited by one quarter of the institutions. This shows that institutions with computers have strong desire to step up information services.

Question 9 Reasons for having no plans for computerization

Majority of the institutions say they '(3) do not feel the need' to introduce computers. The ratio for this answer was higher among smaller institutions. Among medium size institutions, more than 60% say they '(1) have no budget'.

(3) Comments

In sum, the programme most frequently conducted by the institutions surveyed is 'conducting courses, lectures, training courses and other events' followed by 'providing conference rooms and other facilities'. On reflection, the institutions cite information on study opportunities as most highly desired. More than half of the institutions offer library services but only a small proportion have plans to join a network with other organizations for systematic information services. And 66.9% of the institutions say they have no plan for computerization.

When the survey results are analyzed according to the scale of institutions, clear differences in the information services emerge. Among institutions with more than 11 staff members, there is a high ratio of providing services including publication of public relations bulletins and reference services compared to smaller institutions. Many institutions also provide information services using materials and computers, which indicates their positive attitude to services. Sixty-eight percent of institutions with more than 11 staff members has either introduced computers or has requested for the budget. Seventy-eight percent of institutions with 1 - 5 staff members has no plans for computerization.

From these results, the following possibilities may be pointed out in promoting networking of women's information. Institutions with a large number of staff offer active information services today and have the facilities and experience to serve as the region's centres in networking. Smaller institutions, by contrast, are in the preparatory stage as they lack the sufficient facilities or experience. It is unlikely that smaller institutions will step up their information services rapidly as medium-sized institutions do not have sufficient budgetary appropriation for computerization and small-sized institutions 'do not feel the need to introduce computers'. As a realistic approach, key institutions across the country should build a network linking major institutions and expand the coverage gradually to medium and small sized institutions. As the contents and format of information required differ according to the scale of institution, the next stage would be to gradually build multiple layers of network for efficient networking.

Table of Survey Results (Total: 366 institutions)

1. Current programmes	Number of responses	%
(1) Providing conference rooms, lecture halls, sports facilities and other facilities.	298	81.4
(2) Providing accommodations	36	9.8
(3) Conducting study courses, lectures, training courses and other events	325	88.8
(4) Conducting survey and research	71	19.4
(5) Conducting various consulting services	188	51.4
(6) Library services and lending out books	183	50.0
(7) PR activities including the publication of PR bulletins	144	39.3
(8) Others	55	15.0
2. Information services provided	Number of responses	%
(1) Reading and lending of books and other materials	178	48.6
(2) Reference services and setting up an information corner	39	10.7
(3) Providing a place for exchange of information	66	18.0
(4) Publication of PR bulletins	135	36.9
(5) Holding lectures and study meetings on information	74	20.2
(6) Computer-aided information services	11	3.0
(7) Others	22	6.0
(8) None	128	35.0
3. Information which is needed by many users	Number of responses	%
(1) Inquiries on the contents and location of books and other materials	60	16.4
(2) Information on specialists, leaders and other people	73	19.9
(3) Information on the activities of organizations and groups	125	34.2
(4) Information on courses, lecture meetings and other study opportunities	213	58.2
(5) Information on the use of facilities and organizations	100	27.3
(6) Employment information	45	12.3
(7) Information on the community living	32	8.7
(8) Information on government activities	35	9.6
(9) Information on survey and statistics	21	5.7
(10) Others	19	5.2
4. The most frequently used materials/facilities in answering inquiries	Number of responses	%
(1) Books, serials and other materials	109	29.8
(2) Newspapers (including clippings)	57	15.6
(3) Original materials made by the institutions	122	33.3
(4) Computers	10	2.7
(5) Do not refer to any materials (response by experienced staff)	151	41.3
(6) Others	26	7.1
5. Methods of dealing with difficult inquiries	Number of responses	%
(1) Inquire other institutions	231	63.1
(2) Systematically use networks with other organizations	11	3.0
(3) Give inadequate answers	21	5.7
(4) Tell the user the inquiry cannot be processed here	16	4.3
(5) Able to deal with inquiries with own facilities/staff	39	10.7
(6) Others	14	3.8
6. Plans to augment information services	Number of responses	%
(1) Increase books and other materials	102	27.9
(2) Computerization	30	8.2
(3) Improve facilities and equipment	65	17.8
(4) Increase the number of staffs	13	3.6
(5) Improve the quality of staffs through training etc.	84	23.0
(6) Strengthen collaboration with other institutions that provide high quality information services	87	23.8
(7) Use private information services	27	7.4
(8) Have no plan to augment information services	145	39.6
(9) Others	12	3.3
7. Introduction of computers	Number of responses	%
(1) Have computers	36	9.8
(2) Introduction of computers has been decided or budget is requested for introduction	11	3.0
(3) Have terminals	13	3.6
(4) Introduction of terminals has been decided or budget is requested for introduction	3	0.8
(5) Under study	29	7.9
(6) Have no plan to introduce computers	245	66.9
(7) Others	13	3.6
8. Purpose of introducing computers	*1(92)	
(1) Streamline operations	48	(52.2)
(2) Rationalize facilities management	28	(30.4)
(3) Library services	27	(29.3)
(4) Compilation of databases	23	(25.0)
(5) Terminal for on-line information retrieval	31	(33.7)
(6) Others	5	(5.4)
9. Reasons for having no plans for computerization	*2 (245)	
(1) Have no budget	92	(37.6)
(2) Have no staff with a knowledge of computers	25	(10.2)
(3) Do not feel the need	139	(56.7)
(4) Others	26	(10.6)

Note) *1 Number of institutions that have or plan to introduce computers (those that chose answers from 1 - 7 in Question 7)

*2 Number of institutions that no plans to introduce computers (those that chose the answer (6) in Question 7)

The percentage points in Questions 8 and 9 are based on this parameter.

The response rate of this survey is 47.9%, which seems rather small. In a separate survey undertaken in 1991 to compile data on the same institutions, it was found that many institutions did not station staff. It is therefore reasonable to say that the general situation of the status of women's institutions is grasped by this survey.

4. CONCLUSION

The NWEC set up the Women's Education Information Centre in 1987 and started a nationwide on-line information retrieval service (WINET) in July 1991. With these operations, the NWEC is putting into reality its idea of serving as the national centre for women's information by offering services to women's institutions in Japan, which in turn would serve as regional information centres. At

present, the WINET links 146 women's institutions, universities etc. in Japan, and the number is expected to increase further. However, the member of the institutions participating in this network is only a portion of the women's institutions in Japan. In future, it will be necessary to collaborate not only with key institutions but also with smaller ones.

The NWEC currently have databases on bibliographic information that use the analysis of this survey, and databases on study opportunities and other areas (as of 1992). The NWEC will need to further upgrade its databases as well as study and construct diverse information systems to meet the needs of institutions of various sizes. (Nanako Aoshima, Information and International Exchange Division, NWEC)

WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSE 1992

The National Women's Education Centre (NWEC) started offering Women's Studies Course in 1980. The course is designed to provide information on women's studies including case studies and research results on various issues concerning women's life. This is the 13th year since the course began. An international seminar was held in 1989.

The course is open to adult men and women who are interested in women's studies. The participants included all sorts of people of social education staffs and school education teachers, feminist activists, leaders of community activities, researchers and others. The major aim of the women's studies course is to give opportunities for people in different positions to exchange their views and experiences bridging theory and practice.

The course is planned and conducted jointly by the NWEC and an eight-member planning committee which included five researchers, an activist, a journalist and a staff member of the social education.

In FY 1992, a three-day seminar on the theme of 'Human Rights and Sex - in Search of New Relations' was held from 28 August (Fri.) - 30 August (Sun.) with 334 participants from all parts of Japan (including 28 male participants).

A lecture and a symposium were held on the first day. In the morning of the second day, presentations were given on research and practical activities in different sections and participants had discussions in the afternoon. On the final day was held a plenary session at which reports from the second-day sectional meetings were presented.



The themes of presentations at the sectional meetings were as follows:

- 1) Changes in views of on the marriage and commercialization of sex-changing views of the marriage', 'A trend towards the neutral sex and new values of life'.
- 2) Women's studies and learning, education and practice - "women's studies" education in higher educational institutions' - comparative study between lectures to the students and open courses to the public', 'Women's learning and the role of the social education staff'.
- 3) Sexual harassment - 'Women's right to work and sexual harassment', 'Sexual harassment as seen from analysis of conversations'.
- 4) Turning point in sex education - 'Sex education towards a mental communication', 'Turning point in sex education'.
- 5) Sex in expressions - 'Between sensual pleasures and feminine virtues - women's sex in literature', 'Adult video and women's human rights'.
- 6) Politics and sex equality - 'Gender gap in welfare system in the affluent society', 'Employment of women and affirmative action - with focus on the situation in the U.S.'

The points discussed through the seminar can be summarized into the following five:

(1) *Reviewing the way men and women live*

The reproductive sex has been a natural human function just as appetite is. In recent years, however, sex has moved away from biological desire into something more complex with the cultural impact of media etc. The seminar pointed out the need to review the way men and women live. While women need to learn to act on their own responsibility, men must realize that they in fact live a constrained life under limitations in spite of their privileged position in society.

(2) *Building new relations*

The difference in the attitude between men and women on views of family and marriage and gender roles is a major reason for many women to avoid marriage pushing working women towards gender neutrality. The impact of the media has made it difficult for many people to get through to each other. It was suggested that it is important that one expresses oneself with one's own words, not with moralistic, religious or legal language, if one wishes to truly get the message across to the person one wants to know.

(3) Importance of sex education

It is important to think of sex not as an instinct but a cultural product (to be nurtured by learning). Sex education is a study of the human way of life and at the same time, nurtures caring and understanding of one's partner. Sex education should be provided not only at schools but also home, and sex education for men should be stressed. This leads to the reexamination of sexual expressions and human rights concerning women's sex.

(4) Importance of women's studies in social education

Based on the perspective of resolving women's issues, universities and social education institutions have offered independently and in collaboration with each other courses and classes. Many courses conducted by them confirmed the importance of improving such learning opportunities, for instance, by having citizens participate in the planning committee or securing the budget for activities. In this way the techniques of social education and university may be interlinked to enhance the learning, education and practice of women's studies in the fields of social education.

(5) Promotion of policies from women's perspective and future tasks

At the NWEC course, discussions were held on mapping out the

action programme and existing policies. There is a need to reexamine government policies from women's perspective and promote affirmative action and policies. Also, it is time to review women's human rights from a global perspective by dealing with sexual oppression of women in Asia among others.



JAPANESE WOMEN TODAY

WOMEN'S GROUPS IN JAPAN

The Women's Group Section is written by representatives of the group introduced.

JAPAN SEINENDAN COUNCIL

Japan Seinendan Council was formed in 1951 to improve the life of young people and establish peace and democracy in the post-war period.

Before World War II, there were separate organizations for men and women. Women belonged to 'Shojokai', meaning 'virgins' group', which forced women to subordinate themselves to men and become good wife and mother on the basis of feudalistic ethics of Confucianism.

After the war, the Association organized activities to promote women and men's participation in society under the new Constitution of Japan, and to improve the status of women. The activities were focused on raising the standard of living, enacting laws to prohibit prostitution, opposing the revival of the pre-war family system among others. Since the International Year of Women, the Association has addressed issues to realize women's wishes and demands as seen in the ratification of the treaty to abolish all discrimination against women and the enactment of effective equal employment law.

At the 40th anniversary of its foundation, the Association last year established the

women's division with a view to creating a harmonious society for men and women by putting greater emphasis on women's activities. At the same time, the name of 'Joshi Katsudo', meaning girls' activities, was changed to 'Jousei Katsudo', or women's activities. The change declared that women will seek to voice their opinion and take action based on their own thinking.

At present, less than one third of the 1.2 million Association's members are female. The number of female leaders has remained very small due, in large part, to the attitudes of men and the community on the sex-specific division of work. Another strongly related factor is that many women leave the Association when they reach the marriageable age.

It is vital to increase the number of female members to a half of all its members to promote active participation of men and women in all activities, and to create a harmonious society where members of both sex help each other and work on an equal footing. To realize these goals, it calls on women

to lead an independent way of life and take bold action.

The Association held a seminar for prefectural directors of the Association. The seminar, titled 'Everyone's ready for a change seminar' discussed ways to promote women's activities in their locality. Also, the Association has trained leaders who are capable of dealing with women's issues on a global perspective. The Association sent twelve delegates, composed of all female delegates for the first time in the Association's history, to the Japan-China Women's Symposium, which was held in Beijing, China to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Japan-China diplomatic relationship. The Ladies' Forum 92, held for young men and women in the community, provided an opportunity to discuss women's way of life, human rights, sex, peace and environment on the theme of 'Finding and declaring what makes me unique'. The Forum also confirmed the direction of community activities.



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JAPAN WOMEN'S CERTIFIED PUBLIC TAX ACCOUNTANTS SOCIETY

The Japan Women's Certified Public Accountants Society is an organization designed to foster friendship and study among female certified tax accountants and realize a fair tax burden in line with the social mission of tax accountants and raise the status of members.

Since it was founded in 1958 with less than 50 female certified public tax accountants across Japan, the Society has developed into a 1,100 member organization. During this period, the Society's activities attracted the attention and earned high reputation. Both in name and reality, it has achieved remarkable development.

In 1992, the Society planned two major projects to commemorate the 35th anniversary of its founding. The first project was the symposium for the general public on the theme of 'Women's taxes - discussing the one million yen ceiling on the revenue from part-time work', held in Osaka on 2 August.

The symposium suggested that women would be better off - happier in the true sense - if they stop going after immediate 'gains' of contenting themselves with the status of the dependent and work outside the home and bear the burden of paying taxes to build a welfare state. The argument drew a big response from a capacity audience of 850.

The second major project was the publi-

cation of a book on tax to meet the mounting interest on the issue. The book was written by members of the Society from regional blocks; the northernmost Hokkaido to the southernmost Kyushu. The book, titled 'Q&A on Taxation Procedures', will be published by the end of 1992.

The Society's general activities are outlined below:

- * Research: Each year, the research division conducts study on basic issues of taxation, procedures, practical problems and other matters. Findings are reported at the general assembly held in August every year.
- * Institutional issues: The Institutional department studies problems concerning the certified public tax accountant system including the 'revision of commercial law' and 'revision of certified public tax accountants law' for the benefit of members. It also

expresses opinion within and outside the organization.

* Public relations: The PR journal 'Fuzeiren' (Women Tax Accountants Society) is published six times a year. The Society's two chapters, one in the east and the other in the west, with similar specialized departments, publish the 'chapter journal'.

In addition to these basic activities, a special committee is set up whenever necessary. The standing special committee on taxation submits requests for tax reform every year.

Chapters organize study meetings, hiking tours and other events to enhance friendship and study among members.



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EVOLUTION OF HOME ECONOMICS AND CHANGES IN SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS

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1. Name of the school of home economics changes in many universities

The School of Home Economics, Ochanomizu University has been reorganized into the School of Human Life and Environmental Science. The School made a fresh start on 1 October 1992 under its new name. Similar moves are under way at Nara Women's University, the other national women's university in Japan. Apparently the Nara Women's University decided also to change the name of its 'School of Home Economics' to 'School of Human Life and Environmental Science'. This means that in the near future Japan's national universities will no longer have a school bearing the name 'School of Home Economics'.

In 1975, Osaka City University adopted the name 'School of Human Life Science' when starting its doctorate course in home economics and changed departments and courses to admit male students. At present, eight public universities in Japan have a school of home economics. Since four universities including Kyoto Prefectural University and Kumamoto Women's University have changed the name of their home economics schools to 'School of Human Life Science', four maintain the original name.

Also, it became something of a fad among junior colleges to change the name of their home economics departments to 'Department of Human Life and Science' or 'Department of Human Life and Culture'. As many as 95 junior colleges have made such changes in five years since FY1986. While many private women's universities continue to use the name of 'school of home economics', some have made bold reforms by changing the name to 'School of Human Life and Science' and introducing international economics and information processing. Others have made bolder reforms by abolishing the Department of Home Economics and replacing it with the Department of International Culture.

Newspapers and other media have focused name changes at many universities referring to it as 'Preparing for the drop in the population of 18-year olds universities seek to lure students', or 'Colleges seek survival strategy against the winter of plummeting enrollment'. It may be true that universities are trying to convey to the new generation a new image of the latest home economics. The change in name, however, goes beyond luring students.



Ochanomizu University

Table 1 Reorganization Programme of School of Home Economics, Ochanomizu University

[Old Curriculum]			[New Curriculum]				
School of Home Economics			School of Human Life and Environmental Science				
Department	Courses	Student capacity	Division	Department	Courses	Student capacity	
Department of Child Study	Child Education	35 (5)	Division of Human Science and Technology	Department of Human Environmental Engineering	Human Environmental Physics	70	
	Child Health				Human Environmental Chemistry		
	Child Welfare			Studies on the Living Environment			
	Infant Care			Environmental Assessment of Clothing and Living			
Department of Food and Nutrition	Nutrition	35 (5)		Department of Nutrition and Food Science	Studies on the Clothing Environment		76
	Food Science				Sensitive Engineering		
	Food Preservation			Chemistry of Everyday Materials			
	Cookery			Properties of Everyday Materials			
Department of Textiles and Clothing	Textiles and Clothing Materials	36 (6)	Department of Human Biological Studies	Studies on Metabolic Control	76		
	Dyeing, Laundering and Finishing			Nutrition and Biochemistry			
	Clothing Constructions		Food Composition				
	Aesthetics of Costume		Chemistry on Tastes				
Department of Home Life Administration	Principle of Home Economics	30 (5)	Department of Developmental and Clinical Studies	Food Resources		76	
	Economics of Households			Food Preservation			
	Family Relations		Science of Cookery				
Teachers' training course in homemaking		10	Division of Human Life Studies	Department of Social Science and Family Studies			Food Evaluation
Total		146 (21)			Department of Cultural and Historical Studies		Studies on Biocontrol
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies	Environmental Adaptation			
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Physical Development		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Evolution of Human Beings		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Human Behavior		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Human Ecology		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Human Life Development		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Education and Development		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Development and Health		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Clinical Studies on Disorder		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Clinical Studies on Psychology		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Clinical Studies on Childcare		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Human Relations		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Family Relations		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Family Economics		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Consumer Economics		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Family Sociology		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Gerontology		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Family Politics		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Studies on Women		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Clothing Aesthetics		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		History of Clothing		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Formative Arts in Living		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		Studies on Fashion and Information		
				Department of Cultural and Historical Studies	Comparative Studies on Living and Culture		
			Department of Social Science and Family Studies		History of Living and Culture		
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* Figures in the parenthesis indicate the number of students which was temporarily added to the former number of students.

The name alterations are designed to keep pace with the positive changes in the scope and content of research activities on home economics along with changes in society, economy and family life. The reorganization is required not only to convey a new image but also for research purposes. "Home economics" and "school of home economics" are now in a transition period.

2. Significance and research activities of home economics

Students of home economics complain of the lack of public understanding on their speciality. Some people still identify home economics with learning to cook and sew. This kind of comment is often made by men, and students deplore having to take pains to explain today's home economics.

Here's a definition of home economics taken from a pamphlet recently compiled by the Japan Society of Home Economics (President: Nobuko Nakahama, 4,500 members): 'Home economics is an integrated science, a practical science centering around family life. Researches are conducted to determine the interaction between humans and their surrounding environment, while natural, sociological and anthropological studies are made on the material as well as the human aspects of our life. The results thus obtained are used as the basis for improving our quality of life and promoting our well-being'. In the past, home economics has dealt primarily with family life. Today, however, the object of research on home economics cannot be limited to the family as family life itself has become inseparable from the community, national economy, international economy and the global environment.

The conventional research on home economics has been organized around food, clothing and shelter as well as child study and household management. The Japan Society of Home Economics has suggested the systematic research activities of home economics for the new era (Table 2), with emphasis on 'dealing with lifestyles in general as well as their cultural significance and not limiting itself to the study of life skills in the home'. This is taken from a report compiled as a result of studies (1987 to 1990) carried out by the 'Special Committee on University Establishment Standards on Home Economics'. The research was organized by the Japan Society of Home Economics at the request of the Science Council of Japan.

The report suggests in detail the research activities from A through I as divisions, departments and subjects that can be started in future. It gives examples of new home economics subjects such as Division of Human Development and Div. of Gerontology (B), Div. of Formative Arts in Living and Div. of Art in Living (D); Div. of Living and Welfare and Div. of Living and Health (E); Div. of Human Science and Information (F), Div. of Living and Design and Div. of Human Environmental Engineering (G); Div. of Food Industry, Div. of Apparel Industry and Div. of Housing Industry (I). This shows that home economics is a multi-faceted, integrated science centered on human life that deals with issues of the individual, family and society.

3. Reorganization of School of Home Economics, Ochanomizu University

(1) Need for Reform

The suggestion of Japan Society of Home Economics as shown in Table 1 is in a sense a desk plan. The example of Ochanomizu University will indicate how a school of home economics has actually been reorganized.

The predecessor of the present Ochanomizu University is the Tokyo Women's Normal School established in 1874. The school was changed to Ochanomizu University in 1949. The School of Home Economics started in the following year with three departments: Department of Child Study, Department of Food and Nutrition and Department of Textiles and Clothing. In 1968, the Department of Home Life Administration was added.

Table 2 Research Activities of Home Economics *1)

A. Comprehensive / Composite Sciences	Home economics, as a composite domain, is studied from a comprehensive perspective without leaning on any specific field.
B. Human Development	Man's life and its development as well as health issues are studied in stages and as a whole.
C. Family and Family Life	A family is the basal unit of human life. Family relationships as well as family management and administration are studied.
D. Livelihood and Culture	Human life is studied mainly from the cultural viewpoint centering on design and aesthetic factors.
E. Welfare	From a welfare standpoint, family and its members are studied in its relation to society.
F. Life and Information	How information is input to and output from families is studied. Sorting and use of information are also studied.
G. Environment and Resources	Attempts are made to clarify various aspects and varied levels of environments that affect our lifestyle. How to create and maintain good environments is also an important item taken up in this area.
H. Life Science and Skills	A variety of household items and our dependence on them are studied from a scientific and sociological viewpoint.
I. Life and Industry	The industrial systems of production and distribution are studied with a view to clarifying how households are involved in terms of production and consumption.

*1) Journal of Home Economics of Japan Vol.42 No.4 1991, p.391-395

The reform of the school has been under discussion for the past five to six years expressing the view that the science of living should be reorganized to meet the changes in today's social structure and living environment. The major reason for reform is with qualitative changes and the broadening scope of human life, a horizontal patchwork of research fields comprising clothing, food, housing and childcare has become inadequate to meet the demands of the era. It calls for the introduction of new study fields and reorganization of research activities in line with the realities of life and combining to integrate various domains.



For instance, it is difficult to deal with the changes in clothing and housing environment under conventional studies on clothing subdivided into materials, sorting and composition. Conventional studies are ill equipped to handle issues concerning, for instance, high-polymers, plastic and other organic compounds or wastes, or study ways to incorporate clothing and housing for a more comfortable environment. To better fulfill the needs of today, research on food will need to incorporate studies on metabolic control to promote health, studies on the preference for certain foods that dominates eating behavior and the effective use of food resources.

Also, conventional studies under child study can no longer sufficiently deal with the problems of development from prenatal life through the old age and related issues of notable increase in longevity and drop in birth rate. Thus, more emphasis has been put on the social environment - family, school and community that forms the backbone of human development. The conventional name of home management, too, gives a strong image that the scope of research is limited within the family. The social environment around the family has been transformed with internationalization, advances in information, increased participation of women in society, aging and others. It is now necessary to pursue issues of family, women, life and welfare through academic studies of law, politics, economics and sociology.

In the past decade, the jobs taken up by graduates of Ochanomizu University have changed dramatically. The number of graduates in teaching jobs has plunged while the number in professional jobs in governmental agencies and private companies has soared. This is another factor that has promoted the reform of the School of Home Economics. There is an increasing need to train personnel who are able to deal professionally with issues in human life based on the broad perspective of everyday living.

Table 3 Basic Concept for Organizing School and Courses of Human Life and Environmental Science

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| (1) Fields relating to natural environment | |
| a. Systematic research on the environment | (Human Environmental Engineering) |
| in general including clothing and housing | |
| b. Research on food that affects human health and taste for food | (Nutrition and Food Science) |
| c. Research on human beings interacting the natural environment | (Human Biological Studies) |
| as a basic science for (a) and (b) | |
| (2) Fields relating to social environment | |
| a. Basic and clinical research on developments in human life | (Developmental and Clinical Studies) |
| b. Research focusing on human life and living | (Social Science and Family Studies) |
| from perspectives of social science | |
| (3) Fields relating to mental environment | |
| a. Research on culture from basic, historical | (Cultural and Historical Studies) |
| and international perspective | |

(2) New Organization

In reality, there are many restrictions and barriers in reforming a school of a national university. The Act for Planning the Utilization of the National Land, Diet decisions and other arrangements adopted in about two decades from 1955, bar universities in Tokyo's 23 wards from expanding schools or increasing student capacity. This means that when a university draws up an ideal plan for a new system of home economics, it may not increase the number of teaching staffs and manage with the existing faculty. Consequently, the scope of reorganization will be limited to what can be done under the present conditions. Also, the name of the school is set under the law. Names such as 'School of Human Life' or 'School of Integrated Living Science' are not acceptable. Also, universities cannot use the names of divisions and departments already in use in other schools or graduate schools. The new school, organized under these limitations, is based on the concept outlined below (Table 3).

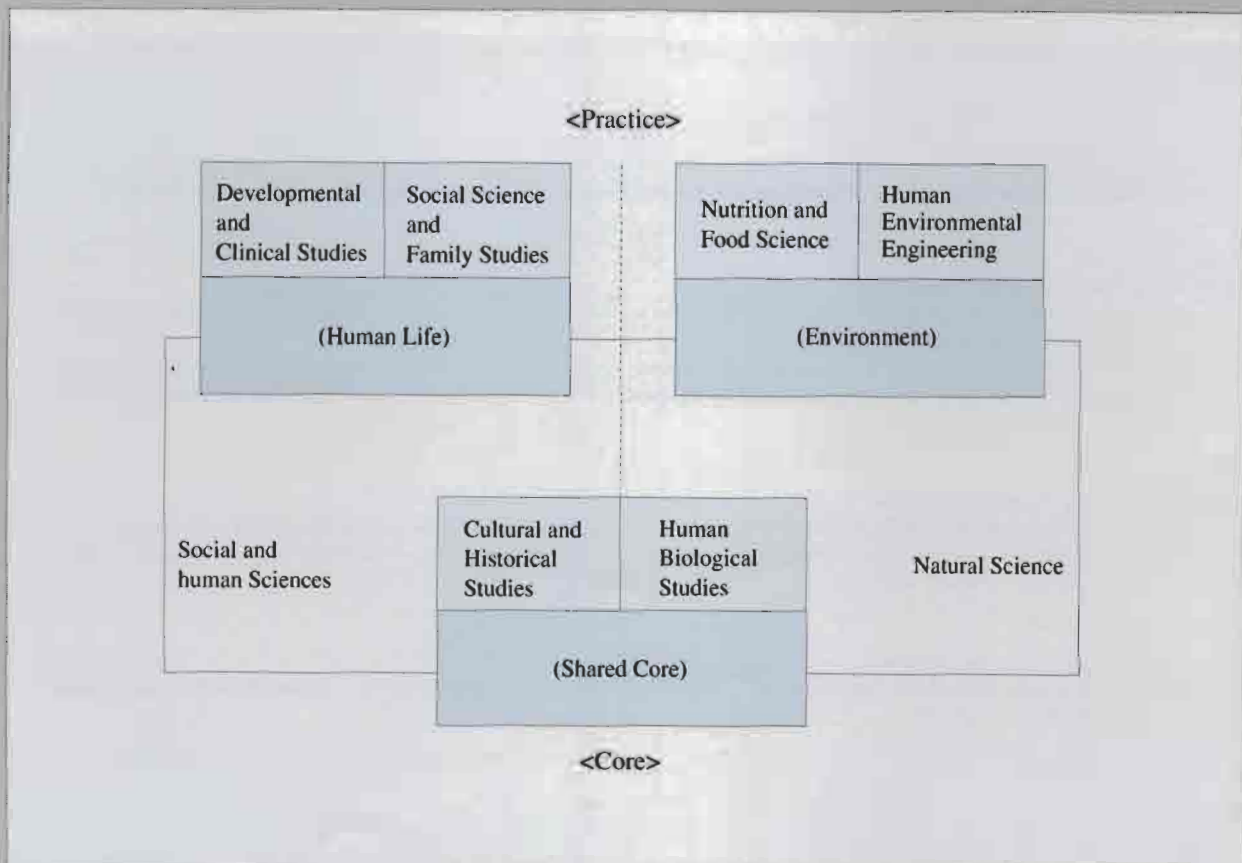
Here, sciences in human life are classified roughly into two: natural sciences and social and human sciences. The former ((1) in Table 2) is named the Division of Human Science and Technology and the latter ((2) and (3) in Table 2), Division of Human Life Studies. This is illustrated in Fig. Table 3 shows the relations between conventional departments and new divisions, composition of courses and main subjects.

4. Future of Human Life Science

According to the definition of the Japan Society of Home Economics, the new divisions and courses drawn up at the Ochanomizu University may be referred to as belonging to the School of Human Economics. In other words, they represent the 'new' home economics. However, we chose the name of Human Life and Environmental Sciences over Home Economics. The term 'home economics' often evokes an antiquated image, particularly among young people, and many may find it difficult to relate the term to the sciences adapted to the new era. It is hoped that more men find their way into the field of home economics. This makes it all the more important to adopt a new name for home economics.

The new home economics, which should be called integrated human life sciences, aims at reviewing the society from the perspective of everyday living, surveying the whole process of human life, scientifically examining life and putting measures into practice for better living. The goal of new home economics and human life science is to pursue the subject of life from multiple, comprehensive and practical perspective in an era of increasing specialization in science.

Figure Conceptual Diagram of School of Human Life and Environmental Science <Practice>



PUBLICATION

ENGLISH BOOK ON JAPANESE WOMEN

OFFICE LADIES/FACTORY WOMEN: Life and Work at Japanese Company

(by Jeannie Lo. Published in 1990 by M. E. Share, Inc., 80 Business Park Drive, Amonk, New York 10504, U.S.A. 135 pages. ISBN 0-87332-598-2.)

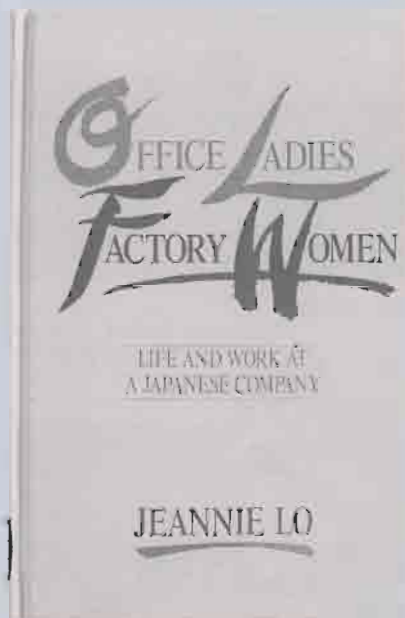
The author, Ms. Jeannie Lo, was a student of Harvard University and spent two years researching the lives and conditions of contemporary Japanese women working in the offices and assembly lines at Brother Industries in Nagoya, the fourth biggest city of Japan.

When Ms. Lo worked for Brother Industries as an on-line factory woman, she tried to understand factory women using two different approaches: first, she lived in their environment and follow the movements of their daily lives; then she interviewed them and listen to their stories and reflections on life and work.

Ms. Lo was housed in a Brother dormitory for single female workers, where she met and talked with many different female employees whom she would not have known otherwise. Working on the assembly line, she took notes on daily conversations.

Such approaches enabled Ms. Lo to understand the differences between the lives of factory women and those of office ladies, which made this research unique and outstanding. This kind of field work has not been done before even by Japanese researchers. Moreover, readers can get from this book vivid images of actual lives of Japanese women.

In 1988, Ms. Lo received her B.A. in East Asian Studies from Harvard University, where her research thesis, on which this book is based, won an award of summa cum laude, as well as the university's Hoopes Preize for outstanding work by a senior.



FOREIGN VISITORS TO NWEC

As of 30 November, the NWEC has received 9,408 visitors from 127 countries.

We welcomed Ms. Mariam Abdul Karim Al-Awadi, Assistant Undersecretary, Ministry of Planning in Kuwait who is an opinion leader as well, on 9 September (Wed.) 1992. After the greeting to Ms. Mizue Maeda, Director-General of the NWEC, she had a tour through its facilities including the Information Centre for Women's Education.



From 20 November (Fri.) to 21 November (Sat.) 1992, 13 women and 1 man from overseas visited the NWEC accompanied by staff members of the Prime Minister's Office. They were participants in 'Seminar for Senior Officers of National Machineries for the Advancement of Women, 1992' conducted by Japan International Cooperation Agency. The visit formed a part of the Seminar. Coun-

tries of their origin were Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Uganda. They had discussions with staff members of the NWEC including the Director-General, and were eager for information on activities of the NWEC as well as information on actual conditions of Japanese women.

INTRODUCING NWEC

The National Women's Education Centre was founded in 1977 by Japan's Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. Its activities include (1) training, (2) exchange, (3) information and (4) research.



(1) Training

The NWEC provides various women's groups with seminars, lectures, group discussions, individual study projects and other educational programmes.



NWEC Training Courses for Information Processing on Women's Issues for Overseas Specialists

Dates : 9 July (Thur.) - 9 September (Wed.) 1992. Nine weeks.

Contents : Training for processing and editing of data on women's issues and production of databases by utilizing personal computers. Tours to women-related facilities will be conducted.

Participants : 4 trainees from China, the Philippines, Tonga and Western Samoa (Information specialists on and administrators in charge of women's issues, or employees of women's centres.)

(2) Exchange

Opportunities for exchange at the NWEC range from international conferences to cultural activities in local areas.



Joint Forum for Women and Men

Dates : 16 October (Fri.) - 18 October (Sun.) 1992

Theme : Good relationship between women and men - towards building a society of joint participating of women and men.

Contents : Exchange of information and study on family education, work, policymaking, and counterplans for ageing society by leaders of various organizations across the country with the object of promoting joint participation of women and men and life-long learning in various areas.

Participants : 97 (62 women and 35 men)

Leaders of women's organizations, youth organizations, PTA and social physical education organizations, and leaders of groups related to life-long learning activities and classes related to women's issues, family education, etc.

2 to 3 persons from each prefecture and designated city (including one male).

(3) Information

The Information Centre for Women's Education of the NWEC serves as the nucleus of NWEC's information activities. The Information Centre holds materials on a wide range of fields to meet the needs of women; approx. 53,000 books, approx. 12,500 local government documents, approx. 1,400 serials, 74 newspapers and others.



Since July 1991 the Information Centre has been serving an on-line information retrieval on women and the family. It is connected with 155 women's centres and local governments in charge of women's issues through telephone lines and provides nationwide the data stored at the Information Centre. The number of connected organizations is increasing. Seven databases are offered, namely, four bibliographic databases on women and the family and three learning information databases. Questions on women's issues etc. are answered by telephone, fax or mail to users in Japan and overseas countries.

(4) Research

The NWEC conducts research of issues touching on women's and family education.



National Seminar on Family Education

Dates : 24 August (Mon.) 1992, 26 October (Mon.) 1992, 15 November (Sun.) - 16 November (Mon.) 1992, 16 March (Tue.) 1993.

Theme : Family education in the era of decrease in the number of births.

Contents : Study of factors of diverse families of today, and interdisciplinary and practical research on problems of family education in the era of decrease in the number of births.

Member of the seminar : Researchers in the field of family education and related matters.

NWEC Newsletter

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How NWEC is Organised

